



## AN UNKNOWN TREATISE BY THEODORUS GAZA

### BESSARION STUDIES IV

**M**S. GRAECUS CLASS. IV, 52 (collocatio 1366) of the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice is a small paper fascicule (15, 6 × 21 cm) of 42 folia, bound in a parchment cover on which a scholarly hand of the sixteenth century, possibly that of Pietro Bembo, has written: "Epistulae Bessarionis et Theodori". On the inside of the cover another hand of the same period has written in calligraphical script: "Bessarionis epistula ad Theodorum Gazam et eius responsiones et alia soluta".

The whole manuscript is written in one hand. It contains, on fol. 1<sup>r</sup>-3<sup>r</sup>, Bessarion's letter to Theodorus Gaza, which has been published by Mohler.<sup>1</sup>

Inc.: *Βησσαρίων Καρδινάλις Θεοδώρω εὐ πράττειν. Οὐκ ἐθαύμαζον μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἠχθόμεν ὅτι μὴ ἀφίκου. Expl.: διαπραξόμεθα ὅσα γε δυνατά. Ἐρρωσω.*

Fol. 3<sup>v</sup> is blank. On fol. 4<sup>r</sup>-42<sup>r</sup> follows Theodorus's reply.

Inc.: *Καρδινάλει Βησσαρίωνι Θεόδωρος Ἀντωνίου εὐ πράττειν. Ἐκομίσθη μοι ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἧς μέρος καὶ τὰ περὶ τῶν Γεωργίου τοῦ Τραπεζούντος τῆς Κρήτης εἰς Πλάτωνα βλασφημιῶν. Expl.: ἀλλὰ Χεζέργιον τιμωρεῖσθαι ἐχθρὸν ἀρητῆς ἀπάσης καὶ ἀληθείας. Εὐτύχει.*

This is in fact a polemical treatise against Georgius Trapezuntius in the form of a letter to Bessarion. While the first three folia present a tidy copy of Bessarion's letter, the rest of the manuscript, from fol. 4<sup>r</sup> onwards, shows the characteristic features of a draft written down by the author himself. The writing of the text conveys the impression of great speed and spontaneity; a great many corrections and additions have been inserted in the margins by the same hand. It thus seems probable that our manuscript is a holograph by Theodorus Gaza. It is somewhat difficult to confirm this

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<sup>1</sup>) L. MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsmann*, vol. III: *Aus Bessarions Gelehrtenkreis* (Quellen und Forschungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte, herausgegeben von der Görresgesellschaft, vol. XXIV), Paderborn 1944, pp. 487-489.

impression by comparing the fascicule with other Greek manuscripts supposed to have been written by Theodorus,<sup>1</sup> for all these are in a formal book-hand, which necessarily looks very different from the rapid scrawl of Marcian. graec. IV, 52. It is, however, confirmed in a striking way, if we compare the fascicule with some pages in the manuscript of the Biblioteca Laurenziana in Florence, Plut. 55, 9. This codex contains, among other writings, two different versions of Gaza's work *De voluntario et involuntario*. The one, on fol. 52<sup>v</sup>-58<sup>v</sup> is written in a hand of the late fifteenth century, the other, on fol. 82<sup>r</sup>-88<sup>v</sup>, shows the characteristic handwriting of Joannes Rhusus. This latter is an earlier and shorter version of Gaza's work, but the margins are full of corrections and insertions, which we find embodied in the definitive text on fol. 52<sup>v</sup>-58<sup>v</sup>. These additions in the margins are in the same hand as that of Marcianus graecus IV, 52 and they are written in the same untidy way, giving the impression of great immediacy and speed. They are characterized as author's corrections both by their appearance and their contents, and in fact Bandini has already remarked that they seemed to be in the hand of Gaza himself.<sup>2</sup> Thus the combined evidence of the two manuscripts, the one in Venice and the other in Florence, adds up to the virtual certainty that in both cases we possess autographs of Theodorus Gaza.

Cod. Marcianus graecus IV, 52 is not now catalogued among the books of the Fondo antico, i.e. those which came to the library as a result of Bessarion's donation. It is known to have entered the Biblioteca Marciana only in 1817, when it was transferred there, with some other codices, from the Archivio di Stato. However, it certainly did originally form part of the Cardinal's library, though it is not mentioned in the Act of Donation of 1468.<sup>3</sup> and has neither Bessarion's *ex libris* nor his characteristic shelfmarks. But it can be proved that the manuscript was

<sup>1</sup>) E.g., Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Auſt. T. 4. 16: Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS. 32, 1.

<sup>2</sup>) See A. M. BANDINI, *Catalogus Codicum Graecorum Bibliothecae Laurentianae*, vol. II, Florence 1770, col. 271. — The manuscripts containing Theodorus Gaza, *De voluntario et involuntario* (or *De fato*) are discussed by L. MOHLER, "Theodorus Gazes, seine bisher ungedruckten Briefe und Schriften", *Byzant. Zeitschr.*, 42 (1942), pp. 50-75, and in the note to his edition of Gaza's work in *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. III, pp. 236-238. Mohler noticed the unique character of MS. Laurent. 55, 9, fol. 82<sup>r</sup>-88<sup>v</sup>, but failed to recognize the reason for the peculiar appearance of these pages.

<sup>3</sup>) Published by H. OMONT, in "Inventaire des manuscrits grecs et latins donnés à Saint-Marc de Venise par le Cardinal Bessarion en 1468", *Rev. des Biblioth.*, Année IV, no. 5, Paris 1894, pp. 21-51.

among the books which arrived in Venice after his death in 1472, and that it remained in the Biblioteca Marciana at least for the first forty-six years of the sixteenth century, for it appears in four early inventories of the "Libri Nicaeni", the first of which goes back to 1474, the latest to 1546.<sup>1</sup> The earliest one, preserved in MS. Vaticanus reginensis lat. 2099, mentions among the contents of "una capsula alba signata M" the item "Theodori contra calumniatorem in papiro", the next one, MS. Vienna Nationalbibliothek, lat. 9652, lists among the books in "capsis ferratis signatis K et L" the item "Epistulae Bessarionis et Theodori in papyro". This last entry, corresponding, as it does, exactly to the title on the cover of MS. Marcian graec. IV, 52, confirms that we are dealing with the same manuscript throughout, which at some time after 1546 had been alienated from the library and, later still, got into the Archivio di Stato, and that our fascicule is not just a copy of Theodorus's work, different from that once owned by Bessarion.

On the first three folia of the manuscript, Theodorus copied out the letter from Bessarion, which had prompted him to write his treatise.<sup>2</sup> The Cardinal's letter, in turn, was evidently written in reply to one—so far not identified—from Theodorus, in which he had excused himself from coming to stay with Bessarion on account of a crippling illness which made all travel impossible. The Cardinal replies that he is much distressed by this bad news and by the prospect of having to miss his friend's company for a long time. Bessarion is writing from Viterbo, where he is taking the waters, for he is himself ill with the stone. He had been looking forward to being able to converse with Theodorus on philosophy, and thus to profit, without making any great efforts himself, from his friend's learned labours. He complains that, being overwhelmed with public business, he has no leisure for serious studies. There is, however, he adds, a more particular reason for him to wish for Theodorus's presence: In the preceding year, there had come into his hands Georgius Trapezuntius's *Comparationes Aristotelis et Platonis*, a slanderous attack on Plato written

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<sup>1</sup>) I am preparing an edition of these inventories which will appear under the title *The Library of Cardinal Bessarion: the early inventories*.

<sup>2</sup>) See MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. III, pp. 487-489. Mohler omitted the MS. Marcian graec. IV, 52 in his list of MSS. containing Bessarion's letter.

in three books. Bessarion proceeds to give a brief summary of the work: In the first book, Aristotle is praised as the father of all science and learning, while Plato is reviled as being ignorant of all scholarly disciplines; in the second, Plato's doctrines are denounced as being contrary to those of the Church, while Aristotle's are proclaimed to be in complete harmony with Christianity; in the third, Plato's moral character is slandered and all the worst crimes are imputed to him. Bessarion expresses his deep concern about the possible effect which this malicious work, written as it is in Latin, may have on scholars in the West, who have only scant knowledge of Plato, and informs Theodorus that he has taken it upon himself to write a reply, not, to be sure, in order to depreciate Aristotle's merits, but to defend Plato against Georgius's scurrilous attacks, and to give a true account of the teaching of both philosophers. Three books—corresponding to those of the adversary—have already been completed. A fourth, criticizing Georgius's translation of Plato's *Laws*, is still in preparation.<sup>1</sup> Bessarion is most anxious to have Theodorus's opinion on his *apologia* for Plato, especially on the second book, dealing with the respective positions of Plato and Aristotle with regard to the fundamental Christian doctrines, i.e. divine unity and trinity, the creation *ex nihilo*, the immortality of the soul, and free will. While he feels moderately confident about his treatment of the more general questions in books I and III, the Cardinal does not want to publish his work before his friend has seen book II and, unless Theodorus expects to come in the near future, Bessarion proposes to send him a copy, asking him to make all corrections, additions and deletions which Gaza thinks advisable.

Finally, Bessarion urges his friend to keep for life all the books which he had borrowed, but to send the manuscripts of his translations of Aristotle's zoological works. They will be returned to him after having been copied. Bessarion is particularly curious about Theodorus's rendering of the Greek biological nomenclature and he wishes to possess apographa

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<sup>1</sup> See MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. I (Quellen und Forschungen XX), Paderborn 1923, pp. 358 sqq., for the discussion of the history of Bessarion's work *In calumniatorem Platonis*. What was book III at the time of this correspondence between Bessarion and Gaza eventually became book IV, while the book numbered III in the printed editions was written much later, in 1464-65, and inserted between the original books II and III.

of these translations mainly to compare them with the Greek originals and thus to learn the Latin names of plants and animals.<sup>1</sup>

Mohler has argued that Bessarion wrote this letter between 1456 and 1459.<sup>2</sup> This margin can be narrowed down by the following considerations: Georgius's *Comparationes* appeared in 1455.<sup>3</sup> It is unlikely that it took a long time before the treatise came to Bessarion's notice, though he may not have been immediately able to secure a working copy of it for himself.<sup>4</sup> As the Cardinal informs Gaza that Georgius's attack on Plato had come into his hands in the previous year, this would point to 1456 or the beginning of 1457 as the date of the letter. It will probably have to be put towards the end of this period, unless we are to assume that Theodorus let a long time elapse before replying to Bessarion. The *terminus post quem* for Gaza's treatise is given by his statement at the end of the work, that he had left Naples after the death of the King with whom he had been staying and, fearing that war was about to break out, had retired to the country, i.e. to his living of San Giovanni da Pira (PolICASTRO).<sup>5</sup> Thus the treatise was composed after the death of Alfonso of Aragon, 27 June 1458. From another passage we see that some time must already have passed after Ferrante's accession to the throne, for Theodorus remarks on some incidents which had happened since then, and on the shrewd

<sup>1</sup>) Significantly, Bessarion's copy of THEOPHRASTUS, *Historia plantarum* and *De causis plantarum*, MS. Marcian. graec. 274 (colloc. 625), is full of marginalia in Bessarion's hand supplying the Latin equivalents for the Greek names of plants.

<sup>2</sup>) See MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. III, pp. 487-88.

<sup>3</sup>) See MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. I, p. 358; R. KLIBANSKY, "Plato's Parmenides in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance", *M.A.R.S.* I, 2 (1943), p. 300.

<sup>4</sup>) Bessarion's own copy of GEORGIUS TRAPEZUNTIUS, *Comparationes philosophorum Aristotelis et Platonis* is now MS. Venice, Marcian. lat. class. VI, 76 (colloc. 2848). It is a codex evidently produced in haste by a team of scribes (there are ten different hands to be distinguished) for the Cardinal, who himself inserted the chapter headings in book I. This manuscript, too, belongs to those not now part of the Fondo antico, but mentioned in the oldest inventories. In that of MS. Vat. reg. lat. 2099 it figures among the books "In una capsula signata M" as "Trapezuntii contra Platonem in papiro sine tabula". In MS. Vienna, Nationalbibl. lat. 9652 it is named among the books "In capsula ferratis signatis K & L", viz.: "Contra Platonem in papiro".

<sup>5</sup>) Fol. 40<sup>v</sup>-41<sup>r</sup>, see below, p. 193. After Pope Calixtus III had promulgated his Bull of 14 July 1458, proclaiming his hostility to Ferrante, there was general fear that war was about to break out; see E. NUNZIANTE, "I primi anni di Ferdinando d'Aragona e l'invasione di Giovanni d'Angiò", *Archiv. stor. per le prov. Napoletane*, XVII, 1892, pp. 734-779; XVIII, 1893, pp. 3-40, concerning the tense atmosphere in Naples during the first months of Ferrante's reign.

character of the new king.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing in the work to indicate clearly whether it was written before or after the death of Calixtus III (6 August 1458), but it seems likely that it was composed at least before the election of Pius II (19 August 1458), for it would seem unnatural for Theodorus not to mention in his letter an event so important for the Cardinal and the situation in Naples. We thus arrive at the conclusion that Theodorus composed this treatise in the second half of 1458, probably at the end of July or the beginning of August.

Instead of giving a brief and direct reply to Bessarion's request, Theodorus drafts, in evident haste, a longish treatise which, though destined primarily for the Cardinal himself, is meant to be read also by other members of his circle.<sup>2</sup> Theodorus is clearly impatient to make his own contribution to the controversy and to expose at once Georgius's intellectual dishonesty and philosophical incompetence. In his eagerness to refute the adversary's ignorant misinterpretations of Aristotle and his mischievous distortions of Platonic doctrine, Theodorus is partly moved by a genuine concern for the truth, partly by a desire for personal vendetta. Only a few years before, Georgius had written the notorious invective against Gaza, *In perversionem problematum Aristotelis a quodam Cage editam et problematicae Aristotelis philosophiae protectio*, dedicated to King Alfonso of Naples.<sup>3</sup> In this he had venomously attacked Theodorus's translation of the *Problemata* and had also, without mentioning Bessarion's name, clearly shown his resentment against the Cardinal, Theodorus's protector. At that time Gaza had complained to Bessarion, but had been advised not to pay any attention to such attacks.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, as we shall see, Theodorus had begun to compose a rejoinder to Georgius in Latin, though at the time when he received Bessarion's letter he had temporarily dropped the work, owing to illness.<sup>5</sup> There is some evidence that in the present treatise he actually uses materials from this interrupted Latin reply to Georgius.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>) Fol. 26<sup>r-v</sup>, see below, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>) See below, p. 194, TEXTS (1).

<sup>3</sup>) See A. GERCKE, *Theodorus Gazae*, Festschrift der Universität Greifswald ausgegeben zum Rektoratswechsel am 15. Mai 1903, Greifswald 1903, pp. 13-19; 24-31, with some extracts. The whole work has been edited in MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. III, pp. 274-342.

<sup>4</sup>) Gaza's letter has so far not been found. Bessarion's reply is published in MOHLER, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 485-487.

<sup>5</sup>) Fol. 21<sup>r</sup>; 39<sup>r</sup>, see below, p. 192.

<sup>6</sup>) See below, pp. 186-87.

For Theodorus had now been presented with a new and wonderful opportunity to settle old scores. By slandering Plato and trying to arouse suspicion against Bessarion and his circle, Georgius now stands revealed as "a new Thersites" who cannot refrain from blaspheming against the wisest and noblest of all Hellenes, and Theodorus's personal feud thus becomes merged with the common fight against the "enemy of all virtue and truth".<sup>1</sup>

The composition of Theodorus's treatise is roughly as follows: After a brief preamble, he immediately discusses Plato's and Aristotle's respective positions with regard to the fundamental metaphysical problems, i.e. he begins with the subject matter of book II, both in Georgius's *Comparationes* and in Bessarion's proposed reply. These disquisitions take up fol. 4<sup>v</sup>-16<sup>r</sup>; on fol. 21<sup>v</sup>-38<sup>r</sup> Theodorus deals, rather summarily, with the accusations of ignorance and immorality levied by Georgius against Plato in books I and III respectively of the *Comparationes*. Sandwiched between these sections is a long excursus (fol. 16<sup>r</sup>-21<sup>v</sup>), in which Theodorus replies to the attacks made on himself in Georgius's earlier invective. In the last pages (fol. 37<sup>v</sup>-41<sup>r</sup>) Theodorus returns to the questions contained in Bessarion's letter and ends on a personal note.

The whole treatise is interspersed with frequent polemical sallies, which are relatively moderate and to the point in the first part, but become more and more personal and vituperative in the second. In humanist fashion, Theodorus indulges in a display of coarse language and obscene imagery, when describing his adversary's villainous character and behaviour. These passages contrast oddly with the ratified philosophical speculations which they interrupt. The work seems to have been written in a state of nervous excitement, intensified perhaps by Theodorus's illness and precarious situation; but these psychological explanations account only in part for the fluctuations in tone, which are in fact ingredients typical for the style of this literary genre.

The dominating note of the first section is struck straight at the beginning:

To Cardinal Bessarion Theodorus, son of Antonius, with good wishes!  
Your letter has been safely delivered to me. It tells me, among other things, about the blasphemies uttered against Plato by Georgius, the Trapezuntian from

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<sup>1</sup>) See below, p. 194.



Crete. This made me laugh, though I do not easily laugh now, the continual worry about my church and the frequent attacks of illness not leaving me any occasion for laughter. All the same, when I read the nonsense written against Plato by Georgius, my urge to laugh at him was greater even than my amazement that this fellow—morally depraved and mentally feeble, uneducated and illiterate as he is—could not keep from attacking the wisest and best of the Hellenes . . . He is shameless and foolish enough to rush into the discussion of philosophical arguments and opinions, when he does not understand anything at all of the serious study of philosophy. He praises the teachings of Aristotle, as though he himself were an Aristotelian philosopher and did not in fact lack all understanding of Aristotle's language and subject matter, and he censures Plato's doctrines which he cannot understand any more than some rustic fresh from tilling the fields.<sup>1</sup>

In his refutation of Georgius's wild assertions concerning the doctrines of the two philosophers, Theodorus takes his starting point from the interpretation of the Aristotelian position. He clearly considers that his special competence lies in the field of Peripatetic philosophy, whereas he repeatedly emphasizes that Bessarion is the greater authority on Plato.<sup>2</sup> But this does not mean that he admits any fundamental difference to exist between Bessarion's philosophical point of view and his own. Indeed, the value which this treatise has for us consists partly in helping us to correct the opinion according to which Theodorus as an Aristotelian philosopher was somehow apart from, if not actually opposed to, the rest of Bessarion's circle. But the speculative part of this letter is interesting also for another reason: it throws light on the difficulties experienced by Theodorus in reconciling his philosophical convictions with his faith, and shows his efforts—which may reflect discussions among the members of Bessarion's circle—to find a rational justification for upholding the Christian dogma.

From the fundamental problems enumerated in Bessarion's letter Gaza selects two for a more detailed discussion, viz. the *creatio ex nihilo* and the immortality of the soul, while he touches only in passing on the remaining questions. He is concerned to show that these problems cannot be treated in the shallow way in which they are put by Georgius, but that their elucidation requires an analysis of the principal philosophical terms employed. As to the origin of the cosmos, it is manifestly absurd for

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<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 194, TEXTS (2).

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 194, TEXTS (1) and (3).

Georgius to maintain that Aristotle had taught that God had produced the world from the absolutely non-existent, for it is known even to the merest beginner that he expressly denied that the world had either a beginning or an end. Plato's account in the *Timaeus* seemed, superficially understood, to describe a coming-to-be of the universe in time. But Theodorus tries to show that on this particular point the difference between the philosophers is only an apparent one. He insists on the need to attend to the use of terms in their special philosophical context, so that expressions denoting an a-temporal, metaphysical relation are not understood as referring to a physical process in time. Thus it becomes clear that, on the one hand, Plato does not teach a beginning of the universe in time, nor a pre-existence of matter in a temporal sense, while, on the other hand, Aristotle, like Plato, makes the world of change and sense perception dependent on changeless being. According to Theodorus, the principal difference between the philosophers on this question is that Plato clearly and consistently stresses the religious significance of the order of the universe, whereas Aristotle is never explicit, but hides his meaning behind the metaphor of the First Mover.<sup>1</sup>

Thus Theodorus, following Neoplatonic tradition, assumes a large measure of agreement on the cosmological problem between the two philosophers, and he ascribes to them a theory by which the questions concerning the origin of the world are not so much answered as shown to be meaningless. This solution evidently satisfies him intellectually, but he is aware of its being unorthodox and he therefore thinks it necessary to insert a curiously ambiguous corollary: "As I love Christ beyond everything, I am delighted with the account that says that the universe has a beginning, and I also understand that the dogma concerning the soul, in which I believe faithfully, would lose its foundation, if the cosmos had no temporal beginning."<sup>2</sup>

As to the dogma of immortality, Theodorus gives a critical survey of the various texts in which Aristotle deals with the soul and the intellect.<sup>3</sup> He analyses the many perplexities arising from the problematic relationship between the soul as form of the body and the intellect "entering from

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<sup>1</sup>) Fol. 4<sup>v</sup>-7<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>) See below, p. 194, TEXTS (4).

<sup>3</sup>) Fol. 7<sup>r</sup>-11<sup>r</sup>.

outside". He discusses the difficulties inherent in Aristotle's concept of the separate, impassible, active intellect, and in the doctrine that the number of souls which can come into being is infinite. Theodorus hints that the opinion of the Greek and Arabic commentators is hard to refute who claim that the doctrine of the unity of the intellect is implied in Aristotle's teaching, but he does not commit himself to it and stresses that Aristotle himself never stated this theory. However this may be, Gaza says, nothing in Aristotle's writing gives the smallest support to the belief in personal immortality—judging from his extant works, he might have had the same opinion on this question as Epicurus.<sup>1</sup> Gaza considers it more likely that Aristotle omitted to raise this question of immortality only because it had been sufficiently dealt with by his teacher.<sup>2</sup> But the very fact that no consistent theory at all on the nature of the soul can be constructed from his writings, leads Theodorus to accept as "more fitting and welcome" Plato's advice to believe the sacred sayings of the ancients which tell us that our souls are immortal.<sup>3</sup>

Theodorus goes on to enumerate the many other ways in which Plato anticipated Christian teaching: He had intimations of the mystery of the Trinity; he showed that the cosmos of ideas, the model of the visible world, exists in God; he believed in divine providence and attributed human excellence not, like Aristotle, to the natural temperament of the body, but to divine dispensation. Finally, his moral teaching was more akin to that of Christianity, as he taught that human aspirations should not be limited to the striving for political virtue, but should reach beyond this natural and specifically human goal to the cathartic virtues by which men can become united with God. It was therefore not surprising that the Fathers of the Church, Greek as well as Latin ones, who had little regard for Aristotle, treated Plato, as it were, as an honorary citizen.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the followers of Celsus and Julianus had maintained that the Christians had derived all their fundamental doctrines from Plato. Against this, Theodorus develops his conception of a *philosophia perennis* culminating in Christianity.

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<sup>1</sup>) See below, pp. 194-95, TEXTS (5).

<sup>2</sup>) Fol. 10<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>3</sup>) Fol. 11<sup>r</sup>, cf. PLATO, *Meno* 81 a-c.

<sup>4</sup>) Fol. 11<sup>v</sup>-13<sup>r</sup>.

The followers of Celsus and Julianus maintain that the chief Christian doctrines are nothing but misunderstood Platonism. I say "not misunderstood, but perfected Platonism". The Craftsman who made nature had to use his handiwork and to proceed according to nature, from the order which he had laid down, as from first principles, to ever greater perfection. All religious and moral regulations and pronouncements lead up to those given to us by Christ as to their end. Surely, it is useful to take this idea as the principle of theological speculation, if we assume that it was decreed in the universal order of nature and by the mutual dependence of all beings that the Son of God (whom Plato called the highest of all Gods and the cause of all) should assume a human body and a human soul and consort for a long time with men. True, those who in their discourse do not start from natural principles, judge that one should simply believe tradition. But not everyone finds it easy to accept this. And if this is not possible, then one is permitted to assume that nature in some way is very much like its maker, and that, owing to this likeness, Orpheus and Pythagoras and Socrates and Plato and Apollonius have, before Christ, proclaimed, if only in an imperfect and partial manner, ideas similar to those of Christ. Christ, however, revealed truths which could not be attained by the light of nature, to supplement those which had been so attained, and he thus brought the work to perfection and was rightly called God, for he was God. Surely, rather than assume that the Craftsman did not make any use of his handiwork, having made it so well, it is better to agree that, in this sense too, the Intellect is the image and likeness of God.

The followers of Celsus and Julianus, and anyone who may try to refute the Christian religion, ought not to be inopportunately contentious and disputatious from too much self-regard. For the Christians' ceremonial and divine service and sacrifice and, in general, all their religious rites, as well as their belief concerning the soul, are conducive to good morals and generally a good conduct of life, more than had been the beliefs and ordinances of earlier times. And it is a great help towards the preservation of these traditions to be firmly convinced that He who instituted this way of life and these laws was the Son of God, and to believe that this God is the guardian of men, and to see his presence daily in the sacred bread and libation, and to trust in a gentle and gracious saviour who will listen to prayer. For we know that in times before Christ similar rules have broken down; their strength did not last long, because they were not founded on the faith in divine dispensation. Now the message is useful and marvellously beautiful, and the belief that God has taken human form and has become the companion of men helps to preserve this message. Therefore it is the duty of a true philosopher to hand it on, or better still, to seek, in a fitting and pious manner, for the causes behind it. One has to take one's starting point from the phenomena which can be known by sense perception and, following up the inferences from these, proceed to an understanding of the matter, and thus to convince oneself that at a certain time He, who according to Plato is the cause of all things, acquired a human mind and a mortal body, and that He came among men and consorted with them,

because it was better that it should be so, and that this was He whom we call Christ.

But if one cannot do that, one should at least never, under any circumstances, argue against these beliefs, nor draw the veil from anything. One must leave off scrutinizing the truth of the matter, accept the dogma, and agree with those who assume it to be true; for the conviction that God gave those laws and commandments is of help in the conduct of life. There is no guile in using a fiction like medicine, and nature seems to intend something of the kind . . . And in all disciplines one should carry on the search for elucidation according to the subject matter and within the limits given by the subject matter; it is not possible to know the truth. This is also the way to reason about right action. And life is action.<sup>1</sup>

The passage just quoted reflects in a curious way the tension in Theodorus's mind between his philosophical theories and his religion. He has no difficulty in harmonizing Plato and Aristotle in the traditional manner, i.e. he minimizes the differences between their philosophies and, regarding Aristotle pre-eminently as teacher about the world of sense perception, he accommodates Aristotelian science within a framework of Platonic, or rather, Neoplatonic, metaphysics. However, though Theodorus restates with approval the *pia philosophia* by which Greek and Latin Platonists of the time evaded the conflict between philosophy and faith, he does not seem to be wholly satisfied with this compromise and finds it necessary further to clarify his personal position.

It is evidently the belief in personal immortality which represents for Theodorus the most fundamental of the religious tenets not capable of rational demonstration. The preconception, widely held among men of all times, of a survival of the soul after death, is to him a powerful argument for accepting Christian dogma on this point. It is reinforced by the consideration that the conviction of such a survival and of a just retribution for good and evil deeds committed in this life, is essential for the upholding of private and public morality. In order to safeguard this central tenet, Theodorus also accepts—against philosophical cosmology—the Christian dogma of a beginning of time, and even the Incarnation, which clearly is the most difficult doctrine of all for him.

When Theodorus demands that the philosopher must convince himself

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<sup>1</sup>) See below, p. 197, TEXTS (6).

of the truth of this dogma and endeavour to reach understanding of it by rational methods, his attitude recalls the "credo ut intelligam" of Augustine and Anselm, but the spirit in which he approaches his task is very different from that of these earlier theologians. It is noteworthy that he does not call for a conceptual analysis of the dogma, but a causal explanation starting from empirical evidence. Aware of the insuperable difficulties of this task, he therefore immediately proceeds to offer a second-best solution: The philosopher should humbly renounce the search for the unknowable and, before all, not attempt to undermine the beliefs which form the basis of public morality. By thus taking refuge in a pragmatic compromise, Theodorus transfers the problem of the philosopher's attitude to Christian dogma from the speculative sphere to that of practical ethics. The philosopher's behaviour in respect to religion must be dictated by his obligation to lead an active life in and for the community, and it is in the nature of action that it cannot wait for ultimate certainties.

It becomes clear in the following passages that Theodorus's argument is not really aimed at critics of Christianity in the distant past, like Julianus and Celsus, but at one only recently dead, whose influence was presumed still to be very much alive: Gemistos Plethon.

Recalling himself to the polemical purpose of the treatise, Gaza emphasizes that he does not praise Plato in order to detract from Aristotle's greatness, but is defending him in the same spirit in which he had, in times past, defended Aristotle against Plethon's excessively sharp criticisms.<sup>1</sup> And, though writing several years after Plethon's death, Theodorus cannot forego a rather cutting remark about the sage of Mistra: "To Plethon happened the same thing as to so many other people: they eagerly seize upon whatever notions occur to them and found sects. Then they dispute among themselves and quarrel continuously, so that they are never free from empty contentiousness. They should agree in their opinions, love each other like brothers, and spend their lives as children of God and nature, not trusting too much to their own genius and effort, but,

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<sup>1</sup>) See THEODORUS GAZA, *Adversus Plethonem pro Aristotele de substantia*, ed. MOHLER, in: *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. III, pp. 151-158. Concerning the polemics started by Plethon's *In quibus Aristoteles differt a Platone*, see MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. I, pp. 393-396; R. KLIBANSKY, "Plato's Parmenides in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance", *M.A.R.S.* I, 2 (1943), pp. 289-304.

where important matters are concerned, leave everything to God the Father."<sup>1</sup> It would seem that this quietist attitude is recommended as the opposite to that "inopportune contentiousness and self-regarding disputatiousness", for which, in the passage quoted above, Theodorus blames the followers of Celsus and Julianus and other critics of Christianity. It is probable that even there he had Plethon in mind and that he wants to dissociate himself and his friends from Plethon's heresy.

Having accomplished the most important part of his programme, Theodorus lets himself be temporarily deflected from the defence of Plato to that of his own cause. Quoting verbatim (i.e. in Latin) some sentences from Georgius's invective, he refutes at length two points made there against himself.<sup>2</sup> One of these concerns Theodorus's translation of the term *problema* in his version of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata*,<sup>3</sup> the other a thesis defended by Theodorus a long time before, in a disputation held in Rome: "Finis cuius gratia rerum naturalium generatio fit, ipsa inducenda in materiam forma est."<sup>4</sup> Against this, Georgius had written: "O ferreum hominem qui non potuit adhuc discere nihil aliud esse generationem quam inductionem formae in materiam. Unde si forma generationis sit finis, sequitur idem sibi finem esse, quod ridiculosissimum invenitur."<sup>5</sup> It is noteworthy that a reference to this same passage occurs in what is now book III of the *In calumniatorem Platonis*, i.e. in the part representing the latest stage in the composition of the work. Here Bessarion remarks sarcastically: "Formam esse finem vere ab adversario dicitur. Sed hoc nuper . . . didicit correctus a Theodoro nostro familiari, quippe agens adversus Theodorum hoc argumento mandaverat suis litterulis: 'Generatio . . . nihil aliud est quam inductio formae in materiam. Unde . . . invenitur.' Haec ita antea sentiebat et scribebat. Nunc vero, postquam responsione Theodori melius sentit, formam esse finem confitetur."<sup>6</sup> Bessarion's words imply that, at the time when he was engaged on this final section of his

<sup>1</sup>) See below, pp. 196, TEXTS (7).

<sup>2</sup>) Fol. 16<sup>r</sup>-21<sup>v</sup>; see above, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup>) Fol. 17<sup>r</sup>; Theodorus is referring to GEORGIUS TRAPEZUNTIUS, *Adversus Theodorum Cagem in perversionem Problematum Aristotelis*, ed. MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. III, p. 281, 21-283, 3.

<sup>4</sup>) GEORGIUS TRAPEZUNTIUS, *op. cit.*, pp. 279, 31-280, 11.

<sup>5</sup>) *Ibid.*, p. 280, 6-9.

<sup>6</sup>) BESSARION, *In calumniatorem Platonis*, book III, cap. 19, 11, ed. MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. II (*Quellen und Forschungen XXII*), Paderborn 1927, p. 321, 24-30.

work (1464-65), a rejoinder to Georgius's attacks, presumably written in Latin by Theodorus, had appeared.

This rejoinder, which has as yet not been found, had evidently not yet been completed in 1458, when Theodorus addressed this Greek treatise to the Cardinal; but it was already in preparation, for the excursus dealing with Theodorus's own defence breaks off with the following threat: "But my own cause shall be dealt with elsewhere, and I think that then he will learn from experience that, by dashing himself against my writings, he has indeed hit his head against iron!"<sup>1</sup> Again, towards the end of the treatise, Theodorus remarks that he had already written something in Latin against Georgius and was going to add some more to this when his health had improved.<sup>2</sup> It is probable that both these passages refer to the same "responsio" mentioned by Bessarion in 1464-5 as having been published. It may also be conjectured that the arguments used by Theodorus in this excursus on fol. 16<sup>r</sup>-21<sup>v</sup>, as well as much of the personal vituperation scattered throughout the rest of his epistle, were to be deployed also in the promised forceful rejoinder to the adversary, which was to appear in Latin.

From Georgius's remarks it would appear that there existed a certain rivalry between him and Theodorus from the time when they first were together in Rome under Nicholas V, and when Gaza criticized in a public disputation Georgius's definition of the aim of rhetoric.<sup>3</sup> However, Theodorus in his letter to Bessarion disclaims that he had ever done anything which could justify Georgius's hostility: "What have I done to him that could have caused him to become my enemy? Nothing, in truth, nothing!"<sup>4</sup> And he relates the well-known story of how he, Theodorus, had, on Bessarion's recommendation, been commissioned by the Pope, Nicholas V, to translate again into Latin those Aristotelian works which had been badly translated by Georgius, and how this had aroused the adversary's envious fury. In the vile outpourings of his invective, Theodorus says, Georgius showed the same uneducated lack of restraint and baseness of character which was also revealed in his life. The second part of Theodorus's treatise, dealing with Georgius's scurrilous imputations

<sup>1</sup>) Fol. 21<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>) See below, p. 192.

<sup>3</sup>) GEORGIUS TRAPEZUNTIUS, *Adversus Theodorum Cagem*, *op. cit.*, *ed. cit.*, pp. 279-280.

<sup>4</sup>) Fol. 20<sup>r-v</sup>.



against Plato's learning and morals, gives Theodorus many openings to turn, as it were, the accusations back against Georgius and to tell scandalous incidents from the opponent's life, showing him up as a knave and scoundrel.

Thus Georgius had reproached Plato with avarice and this gives Theodorus the opportunity of telling a whole string of anecdotes against him:

Georgius was caught by Poggio stealing money. Having then spent a long time in prison, he was driven by the prefect out of the City. This is no secret: it happened under Pope Nicolas V . . . Perhaps Plato, too, lent money against interest, as this man did who denounces Plato? For, wicked and unjust as he is, whenever Georgius could bless himself with two obols, he put them out against high interest to the moneychangers of Naples. In the end he lost his capital on top of everything else, rightly so, according to Plato's *Laws* . . . Now recently Georgius came before Ferrante, one of the justest kings now living, and demanded, against all laws, that he should be given back the money which he had lost by his usury; and he promised to render a service in return if his request were granted, viz. that he would go as ambassador to the present secretive ruler of the Turks and would instruct him, so that the Sultan would change his ways, honour the Christian religion, and become baptized according to the Christian Law. However, Georgius did not succeed in his unlawful claims, but the wickedness of his behaviour by which he attempted to deceive and cozen the King—who is well endowed with sense—like a mere child, only earned him the mockery which his folly deserved.

Or did Plato perhaps commit an attack with fisticuffs, such as Georgius once perpetrated in Rome, when he hit a man of good reputation on the head? As everyone knows, he did not get out of this affair very pleasantly, for whilst he was being whipped and tortured, he had only one excuse to make: he had been drunk when he did it.<sup>1</sup>

The first of these stories refers to the well-known occasion when Poggio denounced Georgius for having appropriated 13 *aurei* from the common stipend of the papal *scriptores*, which were due to Aurispa. This incident led to the brawl in the chancellory resulting in Georgius's arrest and finally in his flight to Naples.<sup>2</sup> Georgius has described his side of the

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 196, TEXTS (8).

<sup>2</sup> See E. WALSER, *Poggius Florentinus, Leben und Werke*, Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance IV, Berlin 1914, pp. 268-272; 501-504, for the account of Georgius's quarrel with Poggio and Aurispa. See also R. CESSI, "La contesa fra G. da Trebisonda, Bracciolini e Aurispa", *Arch. stor. per la Sicilia orientale* IX (1912), pp. 211 sqq. (reprinted in: R. CESSI, *Saggi Romani*, Rome 1956, pp. 129-151); R. KLIBANSKY, "Plato's Parmenides", p. 298.

quarrel in his letter to his son Andreas,<sup>1</sup> according to which he was the innocent victim of the vicious persecution by the ungrateful and envious Poggio. The true rights and wrongs of this matter will never be known now, but it is clear that Georgius was incarcerated only very briefly, that he was never formally accused of theft, and never actually banished from Rome, so that Theodorus's account is certainly much exaggerated.

As to the story of Georgius's having been guilty of usury, this evidently refers to the unlucky speculations on which he had embarked many years before when, after his flight to Naples, he and his sons had deposited, with different bankers, all the money obtained from the sale of their positions as papal *scriptores*. Immediately, "as if Fortune had only waited for this", all those firms where he and his sons had placed their money "had deceived the trust which everybody had placed in them", so that he found himself and his large family in dire financial straits.<sup>2</sup> His unfortunate situation subsequently led Georgius to ask Antonio Panormita to intercede for him with King Alfonso,<sup>3</sup> "ut tandem ad optatum finem perveniamus". In a desperate and at the same time impudent letter he instructs his friend to point out to the King that in his own interest he ought to support Georgius, who had already dedicated to him a great number of translations, for by thus linking his name with that of such an eminent scholar he would acquire immortal fame. Moreover, Georgius suggests, the King is in

<sup>1</sup>) E. LEGRAND, *Cent-dix lettres de François Filelfe*, Publ. de l'école des langues orientales vivantes, IIIe série, vol. XII, Paris 1892, pp. 317-328.

<sup>2</sup>) See *Francisci Barbari et aliorum ad ipsum epistulae*, ed. Quirini, Brescia 1743, p. 302, Georgius Trapezuntius to F. Barbaro, Naples, 28 September 1453: ". . . Nam cum ex urbe Roma, venditis etiam filiorum officiis, omnem pecuniam meam et filiorum huc traduxissem, ac filii mei, ut aliquid facerent, suam quam venditis officiis confecerunt, cum mercatoribus hic XVII Maii coepissent commutare, quam vero ipse nomine meo collegeram apud trapezitas commendata esset, quasi fortuna id expectasset, statim omnes ubi ego et mei pecuniam habebamus, opinionem de se fefellerunt, ut vix tantum mihi relictum sit quanto possim ad sex menses res necessarias tantae familiae comparare; nec spes ulla provisionis regiae vel salarii viget. A mercatoribus tamen ipsis tenuis quedam antea dabatur et tarda, nunc fere nulla". Poggio had already in a letter of 12 February (1453) alluded to an unlucky speculation of Georgius's, see POGGIUS BRACCIOLINUS, *Epistulae*, ed. Th. de Tonellis, vol. III, Florence 1861, p. 49 ff.: ". . . Ago tamen Deo gratias qui nummis a te per fraudem quaesitis atque in turpissimum quaestum foenoris collocatis non sivit diutius frui!" (For the date, see E. WALSER, *Poggio Florentinus*, Berlin 1914, p. 271, n. 5).

<sup>3</sup>) See E. LEGRAND, *op. cit.*, pp. 316-317, Georgius Trapezuntius to Antonius Panormita, without date.

honour bound to repay to him certain sums owed to him by some Neapolitan merchants who had themselves become insolvent as a result of fiscal intervention.<sup>1</sup> It is unlikely that Georgius's request that the King should indemnify him for these losses met with any success—assuming that it actually was transmitted by Antonio Panormita—and he may well have renewed his efforts to have at least his capital restored to him, after Ferrante had succeeded Alfonso on the throne.

In denouncing Georgius's unfortunate business transactions as illegal, Theodorus invokes Plato's prohibition of lending against interest in the *Laws*,<sup>2</sup> but the real point of the passage is the implied accusation that Georgius had contravened the regulations of Canon Law against usury, which had been incorporated also in the secular law of most states. As the distinctions between the forbidden and the permissible in these matters were very subtle and controversial,<sup>3</sup> and as we have no exact information concerning the form of Georgius's transactions, it is impossible to judge them. But the frankness with which he speaks of his financial dealings

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 316–317: “Demum facile provideri posse ut pecunia mihi mea restituatur et sine damno fisci, hoc modo persuadebitur (scil. the King): Ioannes Moner debet mihi principaliter ducat. de camera MLXXXVI, in quibus et obligatur Baldassar Torella, quibus Maiestas sua debet multo maiorem pecuniam. Quare potest Maiestas sua iure optimo propter gloriam suam, ex illa pecunia quam illis debet, solvere mihi integraliter et quamprimum, quum quinque millia ducatorum que Ioannes Moner debuit habuisse a rege in mense augusti proxime preterito sint sequestrata et arrestata in manibus thesaurarii. Beltramus autem Crescellis debet mihi duc. de camera III<sup>m</sup> LX, i. e. 3060; cuius bona omnia, hoc est alberana, ducatorum plus quam trecentorum millium sunt retenta a Maiestate regia, quum ipse Crescellis defecerit et non dederit pannos M, ut tenebatur, per totum mensem iulium. Si ergo fiscus crescit in plus quam trecentis millibus propter defectum Crescellis, quum pecunia mea in hac ipsa connumerari videatur, potest sua Maiestas misericorditer propter gloriam suam dare mihi pecuniam debitam mihi a Crescellis . . .” I have been unable to trace the names of the Neapolitan merchants or bankers mentioned by Georgius in any of the printed sources. They are not listed in: A. SILVESTRI, “Sull' attività bancaria napoletana durante il periodo aragonese”, *Boll. dell' arch. stor. di Banco di Napoli* VI (1933) pp. 87–120. Any documents concerning Alfonso's fiscal operations which might have survived will certainly have perished in the destruction by the Germans of the Neapolitan Archivio di Stato in September 1943.

<sup>2</sup> PLATO, *Laws* V, 742c.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the canonical prohibition of usury and the ways in which it was evaded, see A. DUMAS, “Intérêt et Usure”, *Dictionnaire de Droit Canonique*, V, col. 1475–1518, esp. 1513 (on deposits) and 1506 (on commercial loans); T. P. McLAUGHLIN, “The Teaching of the Canonists on Usury”, *Mediaeval Studies* I (1939), 81–147; II (1940), 1–22; R. DE ROOVER, *L'Évolution de la lettre de change, XIV<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (École pratique des hautes études—VI<sup>e</sup> section: Affaires et gens d'affaires, IV), pp. 1–64; R. DE ROOVER, in: *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. III, Cambridge 1963, pp. 42–105, ch. ii, *The Organization of Trade*.

both to Barbaro and in his message to Alfonso makes it unlikely that he had actually contravened any law.

Theodorus's further allegation that Georgius had offered, in return for his money, to act as envoy to Mohamed II, and to convert him to Christianity, sounds so fantastic that one is tempted to dismiss it as a malicious invention. However, the story may well have some foundation in fact: Only a few years earlier, in 1453, Georgius had dedicated to the Sultan his treatise *On the truth of Christian Religion*,<sup>1</sup> the aim of which was to overcome the strongest Muslim objections to Christianity and to prepare the way to Mohamed's conversion.<sup>2</sup> At the time of the fall of Constantinople, then, Georgius certainly had, like many other Greek and even some Western scholars, harboured the illusion that the Sultan might consider changing his religion. Further, the idea of approaching the Turkish ruler, for some purpose or another, clearly remained attractive to Georgius throughout his life, for even in 1465, as an old man, he undertook to explore, on behalf of Pope Paul II, the regions occupied by the Turks.<sup>3</sup> His ambiguous conduct on this mission and his letters to the Sultan have become notorious; he had to face a charge of high treason on the return from his journey and was imprisoned for six months in the Castel Sant' Angelo. Taking into account Georgius's character, with its strange mixture of visionary enthusiasm, megalomania, and business enterprise,<sup>4</sup> it is not at all impossible that even in 1458 he was trying to interest Ferrante in some fantastic project involving the Sultan, which would have given him an opportunity of undertaking a journey in the East.

We have no evidence from any other source for Theodorus's third allegation, viz. that Georgius had once been arrested and punished for having committed a drunken assault on a respectable citizen. The story may explain Perotti's statement that Georgius had been in prison three

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<sup>1</sup>) Περὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τῆς τῶν Χριστιανῶν Πίστεως, ed. Γ. Θ. Ζῶρα, Γεώργιος ὁ Τραπεζούντιος καὶ αἱ πρὸς ἐλληνοτουρκικὴν συνεννόησιν προσπάθειαι αὐτοῦ, Athens 1954.

<sup>2</sup>) See Γ. Θ. Ζῶρα *op. cit.*, Introd. pp. 57 sqq.

<sup>3</sup>) See A. MERCATI, "Le due lettere di Giorgio da Trebisonda a Maometto II", *Orient. Christian. Period.*, IX, 1943, pp. 65-99.

<sup>4</sup>) Georgius certainly believed himself to be endowed with exceptional insight into the workings of providence, and he thought that the rulers of this world ought to avail themselves of this. For his repeated attempts to reveal to Pope Nicolaus V the knowledge he had derived from his readings of the 'Papalista', see R. CESSI, "La contesa", etc., in *Saggi Romani*, pp. 148-150.

times within fifteen years: "primo iracundia, secundo libido, tertio perduellionis crimen eum in vincula compulerunt."<sup>1</sup> While *perduellio* certainly refers to Georgius's attempts to "collaborate" with Mohamed II, *libido* may point to his greed in appropriating Aurispa's thirteen *aurei*, and *iracundia* to the otherwise undocumented assault mentioned by Theodorus.

Theodorus's invective which towards the end becomes progressively coarser culminates in the announcement that, much earlier, he had already drawn up a pamphlet in Latin in reply to Georgius's ignorant and slanderous attacks on himself and his writings. In this work, which Theodorus proposes to take up again once he has recovered from his illness, he had bestowed on his adversary an abusive name "more fitting for his character", viz. "Gemerdius".<sup>2</sup> As a Greek equivalent for this he proposes to use "Chezergius", and for the remainder of this treatise he denotes his enemy almost exclusively by this new name.<sup>3</sup> However, indicating that enough time had been spent in belabouring his villainous and contemptible opponent, Theodorus concludes by returning to Bessarion's letter and by replying to some of the questions contained in it.

He wishes luck to Bessarion in his enterprise of "driving the scurrilous slanderer from the market place, even as Odysseus once did with Thersites" and he shrewdly points out that Bessarion's apology for Plato should have important results beyond its purely polemical aim: "You will put down many of your speculations and thus compose a book useful to many people. For I think that this is the main thing for you to aim at, and that in this book against Georgius the incidental results will be more important than the object originally aimed at."<sup>4</sup>

He urges Bessarion not to delay the publication of his work any longer and ends with a warm expression of devotion to his old friend:

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<sup>1</sup>) See NICOLAUS PEROTTUS, *Refutatio deliramentorum Georgii Trapezuntii*, ed. MOHLER in: *Kardinal Bessarion*, vol. III, p. 356; cf. G. MERCATI, *Per la cronologia della vita e degli scritti di Niccolò Perotti*, *Studi e Testi* 44, Rome 1925, p. 65. Concerning Bessarion's copy of Perotti's invective, see below, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup>) See below, p. 197, TEXTS (9).

<sup>3</sup>) Theodorus seems to have adopted "Gemerdius" and its Greek equivalent permanently for Georgius. He used "Chezergius" in his correspondence with Filelfo, as can be deduced from Filelfo's reference to this appellation in his letter to Theodorus, written Milan, 9 December 1469; see LEGRAND, *op. cit.*, pp. 152 sqq.

<sup>4</sup>) See below, p. 197, TEXTS (10).

You must bring out your book quickly, and should on no account put publication off for the reasons you mention. For you possess the art of discourse to a high degree, and are at the same time a good critic. You should not make any excuses either about the length of the book, for if a work deals with many questions, it is not too long if it contains many arguments, and, in any case, the charm of your style will make it easy for the reader to keep up his attention, however long the book may be. There is no need at all to hold back until you have shown the work to somebody else. Trust your powers and your judgment and publish! And send me a copy, so that I may partake in your thoughts and arguments and enjoy them! If only I could partake, not from afar, but being near you and with you! But for the time being my illness keeps me away and makes me doubly sore, because it deprives me of your company. I wish it were possible for me to travel and come to you, but I am forced to stay where I am and make the best of necessity. May you live to a long and full old age and be always happy! In my philosophical studies I shall always address myself to you and think with you as long as I live, for strengthened by your words, as by a *viaticum*, I shall travel the way destined for me. May you sometimes have leisure to occupy yourself with philosophy and to satisfy your friends in philosophy, when they have a question to ask of you! But only as long as this is not to the disadvantage of public affairs, for it is right that men like you should be drawn away from philosophical studies to exert themselves for the public good, because only thus can the vulgar be prevented from taking up public office. However, try to do justice to both sides and to make philosophy ambidextrous, viz. use it both in action and in contemplation. For he who is good at keeping still, will also be good at being active.

As to the translation of Aristotle's zoological works, I had completed the translation before the king, with whom I was staying, departed this life.<sup>1</sup> However, it has not been edited yet, for the war being about to break out in these parts forced me to go back to this place where I am now. I have left the manuscripts behind in Naples, and they lie there unbound, having been neither corrected nor copied. They must certainly not be sent to you in this state. It would be most difficult for me to take up this work now and to finish it, for neither my hand nor my eyes are fit enough, and I have for the present no copyist either. That is how it is. As soon as I can, I will try and carry out your wishes. But if I do not succeed, forgive me! I give you my warmest thanks for allowing me to keep the books which I have here, and according to your wishes I will not send you the works of Origen . . . My letter is incomplete in some respect, because you have not mentioned to me any of the arguments used by Chezergius to prove his opinion or to disprove that of others. You should have done this, so that I would have had the possibility to argue against him. However, what you have written will

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<sup>1</sup>) Thus Gaza's translations of ARISTOTELES, *De partibus animalium* and *De generatione animalium* were completed at Naples, before 27 June 1458.

be enough to establish the truth. What I have written was not meant to be added to your arguments, but to punish Chezergius, the enemy of all virtue and truth. May you be happy!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>) Fol. 40<sup>v</sup>, see below, pp. 197-198, TEXTS (11).

TEXTS

(1)

page 178, n. 2: [f. 16<sup>r</sup>] *Παρενοχλώ δέ σοι ἴσως, ἀνδρῶν σοφώτατε Βησσαρίων, λέγων ἄττα σύγε ἐπιστάμενος μάλιστα πάντων τυγχάνεις. Εἰρέσθω δέ ἄλλων ἔνεκα εἶ τινες καὶ ἄλλοι ἀναγνώσκονται τὴν ἐπιστολήν.*

(2)

page 180, n. 1: [f. 4<sup>r</sup>] *Καρδιάλει Βησσαρίωνι, Θεόδωρος Ἀντωνίου εὐ πράττειν. Ἐκομίσθη μοι ἡ ἐπιστολή ἧς μέρος καὶ τὰ περὶ τῶν Γεωργίου τοῦ ἐκ Τραπεζοῦντος τῆς Κρήτης εἰς Πλάτωνα βλασφημιῶν, καί με ἐπεισε ταῦτα γελᾶν, καίπερ οὐ πάνυ τι γελασεῖοντα, ἦτε γὰρ ἐνδελεχῆς τῶν περὶ τὸ ἱερὸν φροντίς, τά τε περὶ τὸ σῶμα συχνὰ ἀρρωστήματα γελᾶν ἦκιστά με ἐᾷ· ὁ μέντοι Γεωργίου αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς Πλάτωνα λῆρος προσγελᾶν, καθάπερ ἔφη, τὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ θαυμάζειν, τί δήποτε μὴδὲ τοῦ σοφωτάτου τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀνδρὸς καὶ τὸν τρόπον ἀρίστου ἀπέχεται ἄνθρωπος μοχθηρὸς τὸ ἦθος καὶ ἠλίθιος τὸν νοῦν καὶ ἀμαθῆς τὰ εἰς λόγους παιδεύσει. Ἡ γάρ τοι διπλῆ κατὰ Πλάτωνα ἀγνοία, ἣν ὁ ἔχων ἀγνοεῖ καὶ ἀγνοοῦντα ἑαυτὸν ἀγνοεῖ, προσλαβοῦσα ἀναιδὲς ἦθος καὶ ἐμπληκτον φρόνημα, ὁμόσε πᾶσι χωρεῖ, καὶ οὔτε ἀσχημονοῦσα δυσωπεῖται τι, οὔτε ἐλεγχομένη συνίησι. Τὸ δὲ καὶ μᾶλλον τῶν ἄλλων οὐτινοσοῦν πρόσεστι Γεωργίῳ, ὅσῳπερ ἄρα τῶν ἄλλων οὐδένα ἔστιν ἰδεῖν οὔτε ἀναιδέστερον αὐτοῦ, οὔτε ἀφρονέστερον, οὔτε ἀπαιδευτότερον. Ἐρρει μὲν οὖν ὑπ' ἀναιδείας τε καὶ οἰήσεως εἰς λόγους καὶ δόγματα φιλοσόφων, μὴδὲν τὸ παράπαν φιλοσόφου ἐπαῖων διατριβῆς, καὶ ἐπαιεῖ μὲν [4<sup>r</sup>] τὰ Ἀριστοτέλους, ὅλον εἶ τις τῶν Ἀριστοτελικῶν ἐτύγγανεν ὡς αὐτὸς φιλοσόφων, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀσύνετος παντάπασι καὶ φωνὴν Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ μάθησιν, ἐπιτιμᾷ δὲ τοῖς τοῦ Πλάτωνος, ἅπερ οὐδενὸς μᾶλλον τῶν ἐξ ἄγρου ἰδιωτῶν οἴός τε ἔστι ξυνιέναι.*

(3)

page 180, n. 2: [f. 6<sup>v</sup>] *Πλάτωνα δὲ εἶ τις . . . ἐκ δόξης τῶν πρόσθεν φιλοσοφησάντων ἐπιφέρειν τοῖς ἱεροῖς τῶν Χριστιανῶν γράμμασι προθυμοῖτο, . . . συμφωνότερα Ἀριστοτέλους εὐρίσκοι ἂν εἰρηκότα . . . , τίς δὲ σοῦ ἄμεινον οἶδεν ὁ λέγω;*

(4)

page 181, n. 2: [f. 5<sup>r-v</sup>] *Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἀφείσθω ἐν τῷ παρόντι. Χαίρω δὲ τῷ λόγῳ τῷ λέγοντι γενέσθαι τὸν κόσμον, Χριστὸν ὑπεραγαπῶν καὶ ἀμὰ συννοῶν, τὰ περὶ ψυχῆς εὐαγῶς πιστευόμενος, μὴ ἂν ἀσφαλῶς ἔχειν, ἣν μὴ χρόνου ἀρχὴν ἴσῃ ὁ κόσμος.*

(5)

page 182, n. 1: [f. 10<sup>r</sup>] *Οὐ γὰρ εἶ ἀθάνατον τὸ κοινόν, ἀλλ' εἶ τὸ ἐν μέρει ζητεῖται περὶ*

νοῦ καὶ τῆς τοιαύτης ψυχῆς, καὶ τοῦτο ἐστὶν ὁ ποθοῦμεν εἰδέναι· ἐπεὶ ἕνεκά γε τοῦ κοινοῦ — οὐδὲν οἶμαι Ἀριστοτέλης Ἐπικούρου ἂν διαφέρῃ.

(6)

page 184, n. 1: [ff. 13<sup>r</sup>–15<sup>r</sup>] Κέλσοι μὲν οὖν καὶ Ἰουλιανοί, λεγόντων ὡς τὰ Χριστιανῶν τιμώτατα παρακούσματα ἅττα τῶν Πλάτωνος λόγων ἐστίν, ἐγὼ δὲ παρακούσματα μὲν οὐφῆμι, ἐπιτελέωματα δέ. Ἐχρῆν γὰρ τὸν φύσεως δημιουργὸν χρῆσασθαι τῷ δημιουργήματι, καὶ ἐκ τῶν τεταγμένων, ὡς ἐξ ἀρχῶν, κατὰ φύσιν\* ἵνα ἐπὶ τὰ τελεώτερα. Τέλος δὲ τῶν πρόσθεν τεθεολογημένων καὶ ἀρετῆς περὶ [13<sup>v</sup>] διωρισμένων καὶ ἀποφανθέντων τὰ παρὰ Χριστοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς ταῦτ'. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐκ τῶν τεταγμένων τῆ τῶν ὄλων δὴ φύσει διαλλήλων τῶν ὄντων ἀναγκαῖα ἐπαρκέσει γε εἰμαρμένον ἦν καὶ τὸν θεοῦ παῖδα καὶ κατὰ Πλάτωνα ἡγεμόνα καὶ αἴτιον πάντων θεῶν, σῶμα λαβόντα ἀνθρώπειον καὶ ψυχὴν ὁμιλήσει ἀνθρώποις χρόνον συχρόν, προύργου ἂν ἦν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς τοιαύτης θεολογεῖν. Νῦν γὰρ οἱ λέγοντες ἀρχὴν μὴ κατὰ φύσιν λαμβάνοντες ἀξιοῦσι πιστεύειν ἀπλῶς τοῖς λαμβανομένοις, τὸ δὲ οὐκ εὐαπόδεκτον πᾶσι συμβαίνει. Εἰ δ' ἄρα ἐκείνως οὐ δυνατὸν, τὸ γοῦν τὴν φύσιν ἔχει τι προσόμοιον τῷ οἰκείῳ δημιουργῷ θέσθαι ἔξεστι, καὶ ταύτῃ δὴ οὐκ ὀλίγ' ἅττα καὶ Ὀρφεα καὶ Πυθαγόραν καὶ Σωκράτη καὶ Πλάτωνα καὶ Ἀπολλώνιον τοῖς παρὰ Χριστοῦ παραπλησία μὲν, ἀτελέστερα δὲ, προειρηκότας ἐν μέρει εὐδοκιμεῖν. Χριστὸν δὲ τὰ μὴ τῆ φύσει ἐφικτὰ τοῖς ἐφικτοῖς ἐπιφέροντα ἐπιτελέσαι τὸ ἔργον καὶ θεὸν εἰκότως ὅπερ ἦν νομισθῆναι. Βέλτιον γὰρ οὕτως ἢ τὸν δημιουργήσαντα ἀξιοῦν εἰς μηδὲν χρῆσθαι τῷ εὐδεδημιουργημένῳ, καὶ ταύτῃ ὁμολογοῦντας τὸν νοῦν καθ' εἰκόνα καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν γεγενημένον θεοῦ. Χρῆν δὲ καὶ τοὺς περὶ Κέλσον καὶ Ἰουλιανὸν καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος ἐλέγχει τὴν Χριστιανῶν θρησκείαν καὶ διδαχὴν πειράται, μὴ ἀκαίρως φιλονεικεῖν καὶ περὰ τοῦ δέοντος φιλαυτοῦντα ἐρίζειν. Χριστιανῶν γὰρ τά τε περὶ ἀγιστεῖαν καὶ θεραπείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἐναγισμοὺς καὶ συνολόν τι φάναι πᾶσαν ὄσιαν, τά τε εἰς δόξαν περὶ [14<sup>r</sup>] ψυχῆς καὶ πρὸς ἀρετὴν καὶ ὄλων βίου κατάστασιν εὐ ἔχει καὶ ἀμεινον ἢ τὰ ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν χρόνῳ πεπίστευται τε καὶ διοικεῖται. Πολὺ δὲ εἰς φυλακὴν τῶν τοιούτων συμβάλλεται τὸ πεπεισθαι τῇ γνώμῃ ὑὸν εἶναι θεοῦ τὸν ἡγησάμενον δόξης καὶ βίου καὶ νόμων τοιούτων, ἐστιοῦχόν τε οἶσθαι τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦτον ἔχειν θεὸν, καὶ ὄραν καθ' ἡμέραν ἐκάστην ἐπ' ἄρτω καὶ σπονδαῖς ἱεραῖς παρόντα, καὶ δεομένους τυγχάνειν εὐμαρῶς ἕλω καὶ σωτήρος. Ἴσμεν γὰρ ἐνίοις καὶ πρὸ Χριστοῦ παραπλησίους μὲν τῶν καταβαλομένων ἀρχὰς ἰσχύσαντας μέντοι γε ἐπὶ σμικρὸν, ἅτε πίστιν μοιράς τινος οὐκ ἴσχοντας θειοτέρας. Εἰ δὴ λυσιτελῆ μὲν καὶ καλὰ θαυμαστῶς τὰ παραγγελλόμενα, βοηθεῖ δὲ πρὸς φυλακὴν τὸ θεὸν οἶσθαι λάβοντα ἀνθρώπου μόρφωμα καὶ συνδίατον ἀνθρώποις γενόμενον, ἐπιστεῖλαι ταῦτα φιλοσόφου ὄντως ἀνδρός ἐστίν, μάλιστα μὲν ἐπιεικῶς τε καὶ εὐσεβῶς, τὰ φανερά τῇ αἰσθήσει ἀρχὴν λαμβάνοντα, ἐπιζητεῖν τὸ διότι ταῦτα, καὶ τῶν συμβεβηκότων εἰς γνώσιν ἴοντα τοῦ πράγματος καὶ ἐφαρμόττοντα τοῖς φαινομένοις τοὺς λόγους, συμπεῖθειν ἑαυτὸν ὡς ἄρα ποτὲ ὁ κατὰ Πλάτωνα αἴτιος πάντων θεοῦ υἱός, θιγγάνων νοῦ ἀνθρωπέου καὶ ταύτῃ σώματι θνητῷ, συγγιγνόμενος ἀνθρωποῖσιν ὁμιλήσειεν, ὅτι βέλτιον οὕτως ἦν, καὶ τοῦτο ὁ καλούμενος ἦν Χριστός. Εἰ δὲ μὴ, μηδαμῆ μηδαμῶς ἐξελέγχειν μηδ' ἀνακαλύπτειν μηθέν. Ἐὼντα δ' ἐξετάζειν ὅποτέρως τ' ἀληθὲς ἔχοι, δέχεσθαι τὸ [14<sup>v</sup>] δόγμα καὶ συμφωνεῖν τοῖς ταῦτα ὑπολαμβανοῦσι, ὡς προύργου ὄν εἰς τὸν βίον τὸ πεπεισθαι θεὸν τὸν νομοθετοῦντα εἶναι καὶ παρακελεύομενον. Ἐν γὰρ τοι φαρμάκου μοῖρα χρῆσθαι ἀπάτῃ εὐαγὲς δήπου καὶ δὴ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἔοικε βούλεσθαι τι



τοιούτο . . . . . Καὶ μὴν καὶ περὶ τὰς [15'] ἐπιστήμας καλῶς δείκνυται ἂν κατὰ τὴν ὑποκειμένην ὕλην διασφαίετο καὶ ἐφ' ὅσον τοῖς ὑπαρχούσι ὄροις οἰκείον· πῶς δὲ τ' ἀληθὸν ἔχει οὐκ ἐπιζητητέον εἴτε οὕτως εἴτε ἄλλως. Τοιγαροῦν καὶ περὶ τὰ πρακτέα ὡδὶ πως συλλογιστέον. Ὁ δὲ βίος πρᾶξις.

(\*) κατὰ φύσιν *margin. pro φύσει*

(7)

page 186, n. 1: [f. 15'] Λέγω δὲ ταῦτα οὐχ ἵνα Πλάτωνα μὲν ἐπαινω, Ἀριστοτέλη δὲ ψέγω, πολλοῦ γε καὶ δέω, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο βουλόμενος ἐνδείξασθαι, ὅτι εἶ του καὶ τῶν πρότερον φιλοσόφων δεῖ τῇ Χριστοῦ ἐκκλησίᾳ, Πλάτωνι πολὺ μᾶλλον ὁμοδοξοῦντι ἂν ἐντυγχάνοι ἢ Ἀριστοτέλει. Ἐπεὶ τοι, ὡς ἐτέρως γε, ἔμοιγε ἄμφω τῷ ἄνδρῳ αἰδοῦς ἀξίω καὶ ἀξιεπαίνω, ἀμύνειν τε προθυμὸς εἰμι ἐγὼ ὁποτέρῳ τις ἂν ἐφουβρίστωσ ἢ ἐριστικῶς ἐναντιῶται. Καὶ μὲν δὴ πρὸς Πλήθωνά τι ἡμῖν εἴρηται πρότερον ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους, ἐρίζοντα περὶ τῆς καθόλου καὶ ἐν μέρει οὐσίας, ὁποτέρα πρότερα καὶ μάλιστα γε οὐσία, καὶ Πλάτωνα μὲν ἐπαινοῦντα, Ἀριστοτέλει δὲ τραχυτέρως τοῦ δέοντος προσφερόμενον. Ἦν δὲ δὴ ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν οὐ πρὸς Πλάτωνα ἀλλὰ πρὸς αὐτὸν Πλήθωνα φιλονεικοτέρως διαλεγόμενον . . . [f. 16'] Πλήθωνι δ' ὡς ἔοικε συνέβη ταυτὸν ὁ πολλοῖς τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων, οἱ δὴ καὶ τὰ τύχοντα τῶν φαινομένων ἄσμενοι ἀρπάζοντες, αἰρέσεις καθιστάμενοι σφίσιν ἀμφισβητοῦσιν ἀλλήλοις καὶ διατέλουσι μαχόμενοι ἵνα μήποτε κενῆς ἀπαλλαγῶνται φιλονεικίας. Φρονήσωσιν ἐν καὶ ταυτῷ, καὶ ἀγαπῶντες ἀλλήλους ὡσπερ ἀδελφούς, Θεῷ καὶ φύσει γενόμενοι παῖδες, τὸν βίον διάγωσι, μικρὰ μὲν πάνυ τῇ σφετέρᾳ αὐτῶν θαρροῦντες φύσει τε καὶ σπουδῇ, τὰ μείζω δ' αἰεὶ αἰτούμενοι παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πατρός. Εἴτεν!

(2) του: *forsitan errore pro τῷ ?*

(12) ἀπαλλαγῶνται *scrips. ἀπαλλαγῶται cod.*

(8)

page 188, n. 1: [f. 25'] . . . ὃν Πύργιος χρήματα κλέπτοντα εἶλε, καὶ χρόνον πολὺν ἐν δεσμωτηρίῳ δεθέντα ὕστερον ὁ ἄρχων καὶ τῆς πόλεως ἐξέληλακεν, [f. 26'] ὡς πᾶσιν ἔστιν εἰδέναι, ἐπ' ἀρχιερέως γὰρ Νικολάου πέμπτου ταῦτα ἐπράχθη . . .

Ἄρ' οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ τόκῳ χρήματα ἐδάνειζε Πλάτων, καθάπερ ὁ κακήγορος οὕτως Πλάτωνος, ἅπερ ἄδικος καὶ πονηρὸς κἂν δυοῖν ὀβολοῖν ὧν αἰεὶ ἐκτήσατο ταῦτα, ἐπὶ μεγάλῳ δανείσας τοῖς ἐν Νεαπόλει τραπεζίταις· ὕστερον καὶ τὸ κεφάλειον προσαπώλεσεν, ἐνδικῶς καὶ κατὰ νόμον αὐτοῦ δηλονότι Πλάτωνος . . .

Ἦκε μέντοι νῦν Γεώργιος ἔναγχος πρὸς Φέρανδρον, βασιλέα τῶν δικαιοτάτων, ἐναντία τοῖς νόμοις αἰτῶν ἀπολαβεῖν ἅπερ [26'] δανείσας ἀπολωλεκῶς εἶη χρήματα, διακονίαν τε ὑπισχνούμενος, ἣν τυχῆ ὧν δέεται, πρεσβεῦσαι πρὸς ἐχέμυθον τῶν νῦν βασιλεύοντα Τούρκων, καὶ διδάξαι μεταβαλόντα τιμᾶν τὰ Χριστοῦ ἱερά, καὶ κατὰ νόμους Χριστιανῶν ἱεροῦς βαπτισθῆναι. Οὐ μὴν τι ἠδυνήθη ὧν παρανόμως ἤξιον τυχεῖν, ἀλλὰ τούτων μὲν πονηρίαν ὧν δὲ ἐξαπατᾶν καὶ φενακίζω ὡσπερ παῖδα τὸν εὖ ἔχοντα νοῦ βασιλέα† ὥρτο δεῖν(†), ἄνοιαν προσώφελε καὶ γέλωτα ὡς προσῆκεν.

Ἦ καὶ κονδύλοις ἔπαιε Πλάτων, ὡσπερ Γεώργιος ἐπὶ κόρρης πατάξας ἄνδρα ἐν Ῥώμῃ τῶν ἐντίμων; οὐ πάντι χαίρων ἀπήλλαχεν ὡς ἴσασι πάντες, ἦνικα μαστιγούμενος καὶ στρεβλούμενος μίαν ἐποιεῖτο ἀπολογίαν τοιαύτην, ὅτι μεθύων ταῦτ' ἔδρα. Εἴτεν!

(9)

page 192, n. 2: [f. 39<sup>v</sup>] Συγγέγραπται δὲ καὶ ἐμοὶ ἐκ πολλοῦ εἰς αὐτὸν βιβλίον λατινιστί . . . Καλοῦμεν δ' ἡμεῖς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἐκείνοις οὐ Γεώργιον, ἀλλὰ Χεζέργιον, οἰκειωτέρῳ ὀνόματι· τοιοῦτο γάρ τοι τὸ Γεμέρδιος Λατίνοις ἀποσημαίνει, ὃ προσείπομεν ὄνομα . . . Ἴσως καὶ πλέον τι συγγράψομαι, ἂν μὴ λίαν μοι ἐπιτείνηται τὰ τῆς ἀρρωστίας.

(10)

page 192, n. 4: [f. 38<sup>v</sup>] Ἄμα γάρ τοι συμβαίνει καὶ εἰς βιβλίον καταθέσθαι πολλὰ τῶν σκιμμάτων, καὶ λόγον ἀποδοῦναι ἀνθρώποις χρησιμώτατον πᾶσι· ὃ δὴ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα σκοπεῖν οἶμαι χρῆ ἐν τοῖς πρὸς Γεώργιον τοῦτον λόγοις, καὶ μείζον τοῦ ἔργου τὸ πάρεργον γινόμενον ἀποδέχεσθαι.

(11)

page 194, n. 1: [f. 40<sup>v</sup>] Ἐκδεδόσθω δὴ σοι εἰς κοινὸν τὰ βιβλία θάπτον, ἀναβάλλεσθαι γὰρ δι' ἂς εἴρηκας ἥκιστα χρῆ. Σὺ γὰρ καὶ δημιουργὸς λόγων εἰ ἀγαθῶν, καὶ ἀκριβῆς εὐθυνος ἄμα. Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ περὶ τοῦ μήκους τῶν λόγων παραιτητέον σοι· οὐ γὰρ μακρὰ τὰ πολλὰ εἰρημένα περὶ πολλῶν, καὶ ἄμα ἡ τοῦ σοῦ λόγου χάρις ἠδέως προσέχειν διὰ παντὸς μήκους ποιεῖ τὸν ἀκροάτην. Ἐπισχεῖν μὲν οὖν μέχρι τοῦ καὶ ἑτέρῳ τῷ ἀνακουώσασθαι πρότερον οὐδεμία ἀνάγκη, ἀλλὰ θαρρῶν τῇ σαυτοῦ δυνάμει καὶ κρίσει ἐκδίδου. Καὶ ἡμῖν ἀντίγραφα πέμπε, ἵνα μὲν ἔχοντες χαίρωμεν τῶν σῶν θεωρημάτων καὶ λόγων. Εἴθε δὲ ἦν μὴ ἀπόντας ἀλλὰ παρόντας καὶ συνόντας σοι μετέχειν. Νῦν δὲ ἡ τοῦ σώματος ἀρρωστία εἶργει καὶ οὐχ ἦττον λυπεῖ [40<sup>v</sup>] ὀμιλίαν ἐξαιρουμένη τὴν σὴν. Εὐχόμεθα οὖν ἡμεῖς πορεύεσθαι ὡς σὲ ἔχειν, ἀναγκαζόμεθα δὲ ἡρεμεῖν καὶ τὰ πρὸς τὸ χρεῶν εὐντροπή ποιεῖσθαι. Σὺ δὲ βιώης ἐπὶ μακρὸν καὶ εἰς τέλειον γῆρας εὐδαιμονοίης. Προσφιλοσοφήσω δὲ σοι ἠδέως καὶ συμφιλοσοφήσω ἕως ἂν ἔτι ζῶ. Τὸ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν λόγων ὄφελος οἷόν τι ἐφόδιον ἐξαρκοῦν εἰληφώς, πορεύσομαι τὴν εἰμαρμένην πορείαν. Ἐἴη δὲ σοι καὶ σχολὴν ἄγειν φιλοσοφία ἐνίοτε καὶ συμφιλοσοφοῦντι χαρίζεσθαι τοῖς ἐπιτηδείοις ὧν ἂν δέωνται παρὰ σοῦ, ἕαν τι μὴ παρὰ τοῦτο βλάπτεται τὰ κοινά. Ἡ γὰρ τοι περὶ αὐτὰ ἀσχολία ἔοικε δικαίως ἀπάγειν φιλοσοφίας πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἄνδρα τῶν οἷος σὺ ἀγαθῶν, οὕτω γὰρ ἂν τοῖς τυχοῦσιν ἥκιστα χῶρα καταλιμπάνοιτο προσέρχεσθαι ἐπὶ τὰ κοινά. Ἄλλὰ τοι πειρατέον ἀμφοῖν ἐξαρκεῖν, καὶ ἀμφοτεροδέξιον τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ποιεῖν, πρὸς τε τὸ πρακτικὸν καὶ πρὸς ἡσυχίαν, καὶ γὰρ δὴ καὶ πράξει καλῶς ὃ καλῶς ἡρεμεῖν δυνάμενος.

Τὰ δὲ περὶ ζώων Ἀριστοτέλους μεθειρμήνεται μὲν μοι εἰς τὴν Λατίνων φωνὴν πρὶν ἢ βασιλεὺς ᾧ συνῆμεν τὸν βίον [41<sup>v</sup>] μετήλλαξεν, οὐκ ἐκδέδοται δέ πω. Ὁ γὰρ τῆδε ἐνοστὰς πόλεμος ἡμᾶς ἐβιάσατο δεῦρο, ἐν ἣ χώρᾳ νυνὶ ἔσμεν, καταλιπόντες ἐν Νέᾳ Πόλει τὰ βιβλία. Καὶ νῦν ἔτι ἀνεπανόρθωτα καὶ ἀναντίγραφα κείμενα ἐν τοῖς σχεδίοις, ὥστε καὶ πέμπειν σοι οὕτω ταῦτα ὡς ἔχει ἥκιστα δεῖ, ἐπαναλαμβάνοντι δ' ἐπιτελειοῦν χαλεπὸν σφοδρὰ μοι συμβαίνει, μήτε χεῖρα μήτε ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντι ἔτι ἀρκοῦντας διὰ τὴν νόσον. Ἔστι μὲν οὕτως. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ ὡς ἂν οἷός τε ᾧ πειράσομαι ἐφικνεῖσθαι ὧν συ προστάττεις. Μὴ ἐφικνουμένῳ δὲ ἔχε συγγνώμην. Ὡν δὲ ἔτι μοι ἐπιτρέπεις ἔχειν βιβλίων, χάριν οἶδα σοι μεγάλην καὶ τὰ Ὁριγένους δὲ δὴ ἐῶ πέμπειν, ἐπεὶ οὕτω σοι δοκεῖ.

Περὶ δὲ τῶν σῶν ἀρρωστημάτων κινδυνεύω μηδὲν εἰρηκῶς τελευτᾶν τὴν ἐπιστολήν, ἔδει δέ με ἴσως ταύτη που πολλὰ ἄττα ἐνδιατρίψαι τῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλὰ με τὰ περὶ Χεζέργιον τὸν ἡμέτερον ἀποπατικὸν τοῦτον φιλόσοφον καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτοῦ χεζεργιακὴν ἰνδουκτιῶνα

ἠνάγκασεν ᾧδέ ποι μηκῦναι, ὡς μηκέτι εἶναι καιρὸν ἤδη κατέχειν σε ἀπὸ τῶν κοινῶν. Ἐτέραν οὖν ἀποδώσομεν ἐκείνῳ τῷ μέρει ἐπιστολὴν μικρὸν ὑστερον. Ἔστι δ' ἂ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς καὶ ἕτερα παρα [42'] λείπεται, ὅτι σὺ ἐπιστεῖλων οὐδὲν τῶν Χεζεργίου κατασκευαστικῶν ἢ ἀνασκευαστικῶν προσθετικῶς εἶ ἔδει γὰρ τοῦ τοιούτου ἵνα πρὸς ἐκείνον ἀντεπιχειροῦντες εἴχομεν χρῆσθαι τῷ λόγῳ. Ἀλλὰ μέντοι ἀπόχρη τὰ σοὶ γεγραμμένα πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ἄπασαν. Ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τὰ εἰρημένα ταῦτα οὐ προστιθέμεν τοῖς παρὰ σοῦ βούλεται τι, ἀλλὰ Χεζέργιον τιμωρεῖσθαι, ἐχθρὸν ἀρετῆς ἀπάσης καὶ ἀληθείας. Εὐτύχει.

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